

The extraordinary story of Henrietta Lacks. Though she died of cervical cancer in 1951, she unknowingly held the key to unlocking medical advancements (from polio vaccines to chemotherapy drugs) in her tumor cells.

Optional Assignment

Go to the Radio Lab website and listen to the segment on Henrietta Lacks.

- <http://www.radiolab.org/story/91716-henriettas-tumor>
- You can even download the mp3 of the show to your phone and listen to when you don't have a connection

Select one of the following questions

1. At the 16 minute mark the hosts of the show ask the question: "So if your cells are taken out of you and they still grow, well isn't that still you?"
 - What do you think is the answer to this question?
 - How would feel if the cells in the dish were from your own mother?
 - Write a well worded and thoughtful Three paragraph response explaining your opinion.
2. One of the arguments against giving people legal ownership of their tissues is summarized in the following quote from David Korn, vice provost for research at Harvard University: "I think people are morally obligated to allow their bits and pieces to be used to advance knowledge to help others. Since everybody benefits, everybody can accept the small risks of having their tissue scraps used in research." However, in a profit-driven health care system, all citizens do not have equal access to the treatments and medications made possible by tissue and cell research.
 - What are the intended and unintended consequences of a profit-driven health care system?
 - Do you think we are "morally obligated" to allow our "tissue scraps used in research?"
 - Write a well worded and thoughtful Three paragraph response explaining your opinion.